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# SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

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REQUESTING THE CONVENING OF A CLIMATE CHANGE AND HEALTH WORKING  
GROUP TO ASSESS THE SCOPE AND RISKS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON  
THE HEALTH OF HAWAII'S RESIDENTS AND TO DEVELOP A STRATEGIC  
PLAN TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE RISKS TO HEALTH STATEWIDE.

1 WHEREAS, climate change, together with other natural and  
2 human-made health stressors, influences human health and disease  
3 in many ways; and  
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5 WHEREAS, as a result of climate change, some existing  
6 health threats will intensify, and in other cases, new health  
7 threats will emerge; and  
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9 WHEREAS, public health may be affected by disruptions of  
10 physical, biological, and ecological systems, including  
11 disturbances originating in Hawaii or elsewhere; and  
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13 WHEREAS, the potential health effects of these disruptions  
14 include: increased asthma and other respiratory and  
15 cardiovascular diseases, heat-related morbidity and mortality,  
16 injuries and premature deaths related to extreme weather events,  
17 changes in the prevalence and geographical distribution of food-  
18 and water-borne illnesses and other infectious diseases, and  
19 greater levels of mental and emotional stress in response to  
20 climate change and extreme weather-related emergencies; and  
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22 WHEREAS, Hawaii is not alone in its concern about the issue  
23 of climate change and health; and  
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25 WHEREAS, the American Public Health Association and other  
26 national health organizations, such as the Centers for Disease  
27 Control and Prevention, have identified climate change and  
28 health as a major public health issue; and  
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1 WHEREAS, the magnitude and frequency of climate change-  
2 related events are projected to increase and will stress the  
3 capability of existing response systems to manage the events;  
4 and

5  
6 WHEREAS, when these crucial response systems, such as  
7 communications for emergency medical services or transportation  
8 for evacuation, become stressed, public health will be affected;  
9 and

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11 WHEREAS, there are ways that the entire array of public  
12 health strategies, including health policy advocacy, health  
13 surveillance and monitoring, environmental health intervention,  
14 infectious disease intervention, health education, and other  
15 public health services, can help to mitigate and reduce the  
16 health effects of climate change; and

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18 WHEREAS, public health workers in the State surveyed by the  
19 Hawaii Public Health Association in 2014 expressed a desire to  
20 help address the effects of climate change on health; and

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22 WHEREAS, however, most public health workers feel that they  
23 lack the specific expertise, knowledge, or skills to do so; and

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25 WHEREAS, a coordinated public health response is needed to  
26 discuss emerging and perceived threats while also providing  
27 public health workers with the necessary education, skills, and  
28 resources; and

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30 WHEREAS, recognizing that climate change is one of the most  
31 significant public health issues of our time and that there are  
32 many other ways in which climate change is already affecting  
33 public health, the goal of the State should be to increase  
34 effective public health engagement and action regarding climate  
35 change; now, therefore,

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37 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-eighth  
38 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2015, the  
39 House of Representatives concurring, that the Director of Health  
40 is requested to convene the Climate Change and Health Working  
41 Group to assess the scope and risks of climate change on the



1 health of Hawaii's residents in order to develop a strategic  
2 plan to address climate change risks to health statewide; and  
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4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Climate Change and Health  
5 Working Group be composed of public- and private-sector  
6 organizations and entities that will focus on assisting health  
7 professionals in preparing for and responding effectively and  
8 efficiently to the health effects of climate change through the  
9 following:

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- 11 (1) Developing, improving, integrating, and maintaining  
12 state and regional disease surveillance systems and  
13 monitoring capacity to respond to health-related  
14 effects of climate change, including specific threats  
15 related to:
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- 17 (A) Water security, food safety, and vector-borne  
18 infectious diseases;
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- 20 (B) Respiratory and pulmonary effects, including  
21 responses to air allergens;
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- 23 (C) Cardiovascular effects, including impacts of  
24 temperature extremes;
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- 26 (D) The health effects of air pollution, including  
27 heightened sensitivity to air pollution; and
- 28
- 29 (E) Mental and behavioral health impacts of climate  
30 change in the health of displaced persons and at-  
31 risk populations and communities;
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- 33 (2) Creating evidence-based tools for predicting and  
34 monitoring the public health impacts of climate change  
35 at the state and community levels;
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- 37 (3) Identifying and prioritizing communities and  
38 populations vulnerable to the health effects of  
39 climate change, and determining actions and  
40 communication strategies that should be adopted to  
41 inform and protect these communities and populations;
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1 (4) Developing recommendations for health communication,  
2 public education, and outreach programs aimed at  
3 public health and health care professionals as well as  
4 the general public to promote preparedness and  
5 response strategies related to climate change and  
6 public health;  
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8 (5) Developing recommendations for expanding and training  
9 the public health workforce to strengthen its capacity  
10 to respond to and prepare for the health impacts of  
11 climate change; and  
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13 (6) Developing recommendations for the development,  
14 implementation, and support of preparedness and  
15 response planning to anticipate and reduce the health  
16 threats due to climate change; and  
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18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Director of Health, or the  
19 Director's designee, serve as the chairperson or co-chairperson  
20 of the Climate Change and Health Working Group; and  
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22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Climate Change and Health  
23 Working Group include representation from both public- and  
24 private-sector representatives in public health and health care;  
25 and  
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27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Climate Change and Health  
28 Working Group submit a report, to be prepared and drafted by the  
29 Department of Health, of its findings and recommendations,  
30 including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later  
31 than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session  
32 of 2016; and  
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34 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Climate Change and Health  
35 Working Group will be dissolved on June 30, 2016; and  
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37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
38 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Health  
39 and President of the Hawaii Public Health Association.

